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Report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Economic and Social Council a report on the main decisions and policy recommendations of the Committee on World Food Security (see annex).

* A/70/50.

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Introduction

1. The purpose of the present document is to respond to Economic and Social Council decision 2011/217, in which the Council invited the Chair of the Committee on World Food Security to transmit to the Council every year, starting in 2012, a report on the main decisions and policy recommendations, as well as the results achieved by the Committee in the area of food security and nutrition, in accordance with its new roles and vision. More information regarding the new roles and vision of the reformed Committee can be found in A/66/76-E/2011/102 and A/65/73/-E/2010/51. The report begins by briefly describing the main outcomes and decisions taken by the forty-first session of the Committee, held in October 2014, and, where appropriate, updates on follow-up actions. The final report of the session, including relevant appendixes, is not appended to the present document but is available from http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm187e.pdf. The forty second session of the Committee will be held in October 2015.

Main decisions, recommendations and results

Update on the work of the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition

2. At the forty-first session of the Committee on World Food Security, the High-Level Panel of Experts on Food Security and Nutrition presented the two reports that were requested by the Committee, namely, "Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems" and "Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition".[1] The reports were used as the basis for discussions at the two policy round tables held at the Committee plenary in 2014, the outcomes of which are summarized briefly below. Policy recommendations resulting from the discussions and endorsed by the plenary are provided in the final report contained in the annex.

3. In addition, the Panel of Experts produced a note on "Critical and emerging issues for food security and nutrition"[2] which was used to inform the discussions concerning the preparation of the Committee's multi-year programme of work for the biennium 2016-2017.

4. The Panel of Experts will produce a report for the 2015 plenary session on water for food security and nutrition and has been requested to include in its workplan a study on sustainable agricultural development for food security and nutrition, including the role of livestock, to be presented in 2016, as well as a study on sustainable forestry for food security and nutrition for 2017.

Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems

5. As a result of the policy round table on the topic "Food losses and waste in the context of sustainable food systems", the Committee recognized the impact of food losses and waste on the sustainability and resilience of agricultural and food systems and called for all stakeholders to recognize food security and nutrition as the central objective of sustainable food systems.

[1] Both reports available from http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/en/.

[2] Available from http://www.fao.org/cfs/cfs-hlpe/critical-and-emerging-issues/en/.

6. It recommended a detailed set of actions by appropriate stakeholders, along the following four lines:

(a) Improve data collection and knowledge-sharing on food losses and waste;

(b) Develop effective strategies to reduce food losses and waste;

(c) Take effective steps to reduce food losses and waste;

(d) Improve coordination of policies, strategies and actions to reduce food losses and waste.

Sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition

7. As a result of the policy round table on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition, the Committee recognized the role of fisheries and aquaculture for food security and nutrition as a primary source of protein and essential nutrients as well as a provider of income and livelihoods. It recommended a detailed set of actions by appropriate stakeholders to address the development, policy management and enforcement challenges to the enhancement of the contribution of sustainable fisheries and aquaculture to food security and nutrition along the following eight lines:

(a) Give fish the position it deserves in food security and nutrition strategies, policies and programmes;

(b) Promote sustainable fisheries and aquaculture policies and management and design climate change adaptation strategies for food security and nutrition;

(c) Seize the opportunities and address the challenges of aquaculture development;

(d) Recognize the contribution of small-scale fisheries;

(e) Enhance the contribution of fish markets and fish trade to food security and nutrition;

(f) Improve social protection and labour rights;

(g) Fully address the gender dimension of the fisheries and aquaculture sector;

(h) Integrate food security and nutrition concerns into fisheries and aquaculture-related policies and programmes.

Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems

8. The Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems were endorsed in October 2014 following a two-year multi-stakeholder consultative process. The Principles address all types of investment in agriculture and food systems, including public, private, large and small, throughout the entire food system. They provide a framework that all stakeholders can use when developing national policies, programmes, regulatory frameworks, corporate social responsibility programmes, individual agreements and contracts. The Principles represent the first time that governments, the private sector, civil society organizations, United Nations agencies, development banks, foundations, research

institutions and academia have agreed on what constitutes responsible investment in agriculture and food systems that contribute to food security and nutrition.

Framework for action for food security and nutrition in protracted crises

9. In 2012, the Committee launched a two-year consultative process, extended in 2014 for an additional year, to develop and ensure broad ownership of a framework for action to address critical manifestations of food insecurity and undernutrition in protracted crises.

10. Since 2013, consultations and related outreach activities have been carried out at both the global and regional levels to ensure broad participation and ownership by all stakeholders.

11. The framework for action is intended to provide guidance, setting out experience-based principles and describing associated actions that can be taken. An endorsed framework for action will provide political recognition and consensus among a wide range of stakeholders on how to address critical manifestations of food insecurity and undernutrition, adapt to specific challenges that are magnified in protracted crises and contribute to resolving the underlying causes of food insecurity and undernutrition in those contexts.

12. The intended users of the principles are all stakeholders with a role in improving food security and nutrition in protracted crises, namely those providing both short-term and long-term assistance, but also those with a role in contributing to their own food security and nutrition. The principles will be voluntary and should be interpreted and applied in line with existing obligations under national and international law.

13. A finalized framework for action will be submitted for endorsement to the forty second session of the Committee in 2015.

Multi-year programme of work

14. The Committee recommended that the Open-Ended Working Group on the multi-year programme of work continue its work with a view to presenting a proposal on the activities to be carried out by the Committee in the biennium 2016-2017 for endorsement by the plenary in 2015.

15. It also requested that a revised version of the note outlining the different steps of the process for the selection and prioritization of Committee activities be presented at the plenary in 2015 for approval.

Monitoring Committee decisions and recommendations

16. At its forty-first session in October 2014, the Committee decided that an opinion survey would be carried out to gather perceptions about Committee effectiveness as a first step to developing a more comprehensive monitoring framework.

17. Since then, and in accordance with the methodology outlined in the document entitled "Towards a framework for monitoring CFS decisions and recommendations"[3] endorsed at the forty-first session, the CFS Effectiveness Opinion Survey was

[3] Available from http://www.fao.org/bodies/cfs/cfs41/en/.

designed to solicit opinions and perceptions by stakeholders on the Committee's effectiveness, relevance, inclusiveness and participation, coordination and engagement, promotion of policy convergence, evidence-based decision-making, communication strategy, responsiveness, influence and capacity for uptake of Committee products.

18. The survey was implemented in the first quarter of 2015 and its findings and results will be reported at the forty-second session of the Committee.

High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets

19. The High-Level Forum on Connecting Smallholders to Markets will take place on 25 June 2015. The event was organized by the Committee with the technical support of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP) as well as with contributions by the civil society mechanism and the private sector mechanism to the preparation of the background document that informed the discussions. The objective was to reach common understanding among stakeholders regarding opportunities and challenges facing access to markets by smallholders in diverse contexts as well as to identify ways in which the Committee can contribute to addressing those challenges. Finally, the forum was requested to identify broad recommendations on areas for priority actions to strengthen smallholder access to markets. The outcomes of the forum will be presented at the Committee plenary in October 2015.

Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition

20. The Committee endorsed the third version of the Global Strategic Framework for Food Security and Nutrition, which includes the policy recommendations for biofuels and food security and investing in smallholder agriculture for food security and nutrition that were endorsed at the fortieth session of the Committee in 2013, as well as the statistical figures included in *The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2013* released by FAO, IFAD and WFP.

Right to food 10-year perspective

21. The Committee discussed the different dimensions of the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Food Security, looked back at the progress made over the last 10 years, reviewed the lessons learned and best practices with a view to identifying gaps and challenges and discussed the way forward.

22. It welcomed the contribution of the Voluntary Guidelines in guiding national Governments in the design and implementation of food security and nutrition policies, programmes and legal frameworks and reaffirmed its commitment towards achieving the progressive realization of the right to food in the years to come.

Communication and outreach

23. At its forty-first session, the Committee took note of ongoing communication and outreach activities and emphasized the importance of communication to support effective implementation and realization of Committee recommendations and

decisions. All Committee stakeholders were urged to take appropriate action to disseminate Committee products through their constituencies and be active participants in raising awareness of their uses. FAO, IFAD and WFP were urged to disseminate information about Committee products and their uses throughout their organizations both in Rome and in decentralized offices. Since the forty-first session, the Committee secretariat has increased engagement with the regional offices of FAO, IFAD and WFP to raise their awareness of the products of the Committee and how they can be used to support their work at the regional and national levels. The Committee has co-organized a regional multi-stakeholder workshop together with the FAO regional office, and in partnership with WFP, IFAD and other United Nations organizations, to discuss with country representatives and regional multi-stakeholders the implementation of Committee policy guidance at regional and national levels.

Rules of procedure

24. The Committee amended its rules of procedure concerning the selection criteria for the appointment of the members of the Panel of Experts Steering Committee and the roles of the Committee Advisory Group. It also endorsed the recommendation of the Committee Bureau to allow representatives of academia to participate as observers in Committee meetings.

Annex

Report of the forty-first session of the Committee on World Food Security (Rome, 13-17 October 2014)

The full report of the forty-first session of the Committee on World Food Security, which was held at the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, from 13 to 17 October 2014, can be found at the following link: http://www.fao.org/3/a-mm187e.pdf.

The report includes appendix A, Agenda of the session; appendix B, Membership of the Committee; appendix C, List of documents; appendix D, Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems; appendix E, Explanations of position of members which requested that they be included in the final report; and appendix F, Proposed amendments to the CFS rules of procedure.